

the authority to strike now to protect the interests of the United States—and I expect President Obama will do that. I am talking about in Syria.

It is clear the President has already appropriately started the attacks, and has done it very well and successfully in the Kurdish region and other regions of northern Iraq, and that will continue as the President feels he has the authority, and I happen to agree. But when it comes to Syria—and that is where the head of the ISIS snake is; and if you are going to kill the snake, you have to go to where the head is and chop it off—I think it is a mistake for us to go home. I think it sends a very bad message not only to our countrymen, but it sends a very bad message to our allies and to our enemies. The opposite message would be sent if we would discuss these matters and come together with a resolution of an authorization for the use of military force and to have that clearly stating that the United States is unified to go after this insidious, evil, brutal, uncivil kind of force. It would send a message of unity not only to our allies, to this country of ours, but to our enemies.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, what is the order?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to speak until I conclude. It may go over that time, but not by much.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION AND ISIL

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you so much, Madam President.

I am here because I want to respond to the colloquy that was held on the Keystone Pipeline, but before I go there, I do want to make remarks about the very important vote we are going to be taking today both to keep the government open and to give the President the ability to train and equip vetted Syrian moderates so they can help us take the fight to ISIL.

It is my privilege to serve on the Foreign Relations Committee. I have served on it for a very long time, and yesterday we had an important hearing where the Secretary of State laid out the President's plans for how we are going to meet this threat posed by ISIL.

I have to say, before I explain the three options you have as an American as far as which option you embrace, I think I need to lay out the view of this organization ISIL or ISIS. There are different ways to describe them. They are an outgrowth of Al Qaeda in Iraq, which came about because of the catastrophic Iraq war that was based on

false premises, that put us in the middle of a civil war, and created the worst sectarian tensions. One of my proudest moments was voting no on that.

Then the Bush administration said Saddam Hussein was involved with 9/11, that he had nuclear weapons, and none of it was so. None of it was so. As a result we got in the middle of this war.

We were told it would last 6 months, and then a year went by, another year, years, years, years, and it became one of our longest wars, and 4,000-plus Americans dead, tens of thousands wounded, some with very serious wounds—they will never get over them—and I would say well over \$1 trillion that drew us into a terrible recession when we had previously had surpluses. What a nightmare. So that is the beginning of ISIL, an outgrowth of Al Qaeda.

There were two authorizations for the use of military force that I got to vote on. One of them was right after 9/11 when I voted to go after bin Laden and Al Qaeda and any other affiliate organization that would come out of Al Qaeda. That is one I voted for. That is why I believe the President has the authority, based on that document, to move forward and take the fight to ISIL.

The other authorization for use of force was permission to go into Iraq and go after Saddam Hussein. I voted no on that.

I think it is important to the American people to remember why we are facing trouble, but it is what it is. There are some who say—because there are three approaches here—do nothing. There are some who say do nothing. My view is: How can we possibly do nothing in the face of a group that has beheaded two innocent freelance journalists? How can you do nothing in the face of a group that sells 14-year-old girls as slaves? How can you do nothing in the face of a brute, ISIL, who, if they don't sell a 14-year-old as a slave and they let her live, give her to a warrior as a reward? How do we sit back and do nothing?

We saw what they did to minorities, the Yazidis. They said: Either you convert, flee, or we will kill you.

We cannot sit back. They did it to Christians, Yazidis. They did it to Turkmen. They have taken hostages including more than 40 Turkish hostages. We don't even know the count or what are the nationalities, but we know their intent. This is a quote from them, that they are going to make sure their thirst for American blood is quenched. This is a sick situation, and to the people who say do nothing, I say to them: I understand your concern for unintended consequences, but don't count me in your camp, because I cannot do that.

I am so cautious when it comes to voting to go to war. I know it is not easy. We don't know every single thing that can happen, what can go wrong. Things do go wrong. But my view is in this case if I were to sit back and say

I am too afraid, I am too nervous, that is exactly the wrong signal to send a group of terrorists such as this. I have never seen a group like this. So one path is to do nothing.

The other path is to start up the Iraq war all over again. Colleagues in this Chamber, pounding the table: Troops on the ground. Send our American troops back. No way, no way. I am not going to send our troops back to the middle of a civil war. What we are going to do is another way—President Obama's strategy, which is the moderate strategy here. It is to take our intelligence, our strategy, our Air Force assets, and make sure those in the region who have the most at stake—remember, ISIL has killed more Muslims than anybody else—that they will be the boots on the ground. We see that strategy is working in Iraq.

It is early. We don't know how it is all going to go. But we have started this strategy where they will take back key pieces of territory—a dam, very important—and we seem to be able to coordinate well with the Kurds and the Iraqi forces.

Clearly our President is right when he says this is about the whole world. The whole world has to care about this, because this is about, truly, civilization, and every civilized person has to stand up against this. What the President is doing with the Secretary of State and our Vice President is they are building coalitions. For the first time we see the Arab nations coming forward.

So when I vote today for the continuing resolution, I want it to be clear to my constituents—and they are not all going to agree with me, I know that—that I am in favor of this strategy. I am in favor of training the moderate Syrians to take the fight to ISIL on the ground. And I can tell you because I was in Turkey in August—I had the privilege of meeting with the head of one of the moderate Syrian organizations. His comments were very strong that ISIL is absolutely going against the moderate Syrians. So it is very important that the moderate Syrians are able to fight back against ISIL. That is what we are voting for today, to allow the President to vet, train, and arm the moderate Syrian opposition to the Syrian President and also in that regard go after ISIL.

I know everything is complicated in life and nothing is the perfect solution, but if I could say rhetorically, what is wrong is to do nothing. What is wrong is to go back into the Iraq war. What is right is to organize the world through a coalition, use the American assets—because no one can do what we can do—but on the ground in the combat mission, utilize the regional forces.

I wanted to be clear today where I stand. There are three choices, and I choose the path President Obama has put together. I think the vote in the House was a very important vote yesterday because it showed there is a majority of Democrats and Republicans who can come together.

Following that, we were in the House this morning to hear the President of Ukraine. It was very touching and very moving. President Poroshenko laid out in the most beautiful language, I thought, because of its simplicity, the beauty of freedom and what they are fighting for. What I loved so much about it was the fact that his speech united everybody in the room. There wasn't one group that sat down or didn't stand up to express their appreciation for what his countrymen are going through.

I hope we can get behind this President in this fight against the terror group that is probably the best-funded terror group ever in existence, the most barbaric I have ever seen. I hope there will be a good vote today. I think that would send a very important message that we are sincere and will bring more people to our coalition.

KEYSTONE PIPELINE

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I said I was going to talk about an issue I know the Presiding Officer and I don't agree on. I have total respect for her view. The people of her State are so lucky to have her fighting their fight on energy. The people of my State have a disagreement. We are very fearful about climate change. So we are also worried about the health impact of the tar sands.

I am going to make a few comments about why I think we should disrupt the process that is happening now with Keystone. It is a well-established process for considering projects such as this. The purpose of the review process isn't just to waste time. It is to determine whether the construction of the Keystone tar sands pipeline is in fact in the national interest. This is important. It is a major project.

In the past, Republicans have attempted to circumvent the review process for Keystone by creating shortcuts that in my opinion put our families' health at risk.

I want to show you a chart. It shows you that tar sands oil is one of the filthiest kinds of oil on the planet.

Let's look at a place in Texas where we see the tar sands oil being refined. This is Port Arthur. We have had visits from the Port Arthur community, and they said, please, we want to bear witness to the fact that this is what it looks like when these tar sands are burned. It hurts the health of our people. Residents along the gulf coast are suffering from asthma, respiratory illness, skin irritation, and cancer, and to get to the gulf coast the tar sands will be transported by pipeline through communities in environmentally sensitive areas in six States. It will pass through key sources of drinking water.

Look what happened in West Virginia when they couldn't drink the water there. It was a nightmare.

We have had experience with tar sands. People talk about how the pipeline is one thing, but it is what goes

through it that is critical, and what is going to go through it if it gets built is the dirtiest, filthiest kind of water we know.

What happens in places such as Detroit and Chicago, where they store the byproduct known as petcoke—take a look at this. This is what it looks like. It looks like filthy, dirty pollution, and unfortunately for the people, that is what it is.

When the wind is blowing, we see black clouds containing concentrated heavy metals. Children playing baseball have been forced off the field to seek cover to avoid the black dust that pelts their homes and cars. Petcoke dust is a particulate matter, which is the most harmful of all air pollutants. Why? Its particles are so small, they lodge in your lungs and cause terribly severe asthma attacks, aggravate bronchitis and other lung diseases, and reduce the body's ability to fight infections. Asthma affects 12 out of every 26 people—and 7 million of those are children.

If I could, I would ask the people in the gallery how many of them have asthma or know someone who has asthma. I know a lot of them would raise their hands. It is ubiquitous. We don't need more asthma.

There are other ways to go, and my State and other countries are proving it. We can move to clean energy. We need to have a comprehensive human health impact on the tar sands that would go through that pipeline because human health is important. If you can't breathe, you can't work. It is as simple as that. If you can't breathe, you can't go to school and get an education. If you can't drink the water, it is a serious problem.

While my Republican friends come down and say: Let's bypass all of this evidence and move forward, that is a dangerous idea. It is a dangerous idea.

I went to China about a year ago. You cannot see one foot in front of the other in China. That is how bad the air is because they don't care about the environment. They say: Oh, we don't need rules; we don't need regulations. Build, build, build. Do it, do it, do it, do it. Go and get it out of the ground.

There are moments we need to look at what we are doing. We are doing great right now on energy. Under this President we have become more energy efficient. Yes, there are places to drill, there are places to get energy, but it has to be clean and it has to be good.

We have just come out of the hottest August ever known to humankind since we began keeping the records in the 1800s. Climate change is so real, the only place they don't know it is here is the United States Senate. They don't know. Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil. Everything is great. Everything is good.

My colleague from Vermont is brilliant on this point, and we know the Keystone tar sands pipeline will create 17 percent more carbon than domestic oil. This is a dirty, filthy oil that is the

equivalent of adding 5.8 million new cars to the road, or eight new coal powerplants.

The State Department has concluded that the annual carbon pollution from just the daily operation of the pipeline will be the equivalent to adding 300,000 new cars on the road. If we do this, we will go backward on climate change. We cannot afford to do it.

I know people get impatient with decisionmaking—whether it is deciding how to take the fight to ISIL—and I am glad I have a deliberative President who didn't just say: Do this and this. He thought about it and came up with an idea for a coalition to do it right. When you are looking at something such as the Keystone XL Pipeline, which is going to vastly increase the importation of this filthy, dirty oil, we ought to take our time.

My very last point. I am so proud to chair the Environment and Public Works Committee. Four former Republican EPA Administrators who served under Presidents Nixon, Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush spoke out on the need to address the danger of climate change.

Really, this is not about bipartisanship. Ninety-seven percent of scientists tell us climate change is real and caused by human activity. Please, let's take our time. When we are faced with a project that will set us back—the dirtiest, dirtiest oil—a picture is worth a thousand words, and this is not what I want to leave to our children.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank Senator BOXER not only for her remarks today but for her years and years of commitment to the environmental committee and pointing out the danger of climate change and the toxicity in our air.

ISIS

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the dangerous and brutal extremist organization called ISIS, the terrorist army, which in recent months has overrun vast swaths of Iraq and Syria and is a serious threat to the stability of the region, and, in fact, to the international community.

But before I do that, I also want to say that ISIS is not the only major problem facing our country. It would be a real tragedy if, in our legitimate concerns about the dangers of ISIS, we continue to ignore the very serious problems that are taking place right here in the United States of America and impacting tens of millions of working families.

There are crises here at home we have ignored for too long. Real unemployment today is 12 percent, youth unemployment is 20 percent. We can't ignore it. The minimum wage nationally is at a starvation wage of \$7.25 an hour. We cannot ignore that reality. We have to raise the minimum wage.